



# MENTALLY ILL OFFENDER CRIME REDUCTION GRANT PROGRAM

## EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE (ESC) RECOMMENDATIONS 2006-07 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

*1. How should the CSA define “priority consideration” (as required by AB 1811) for the 15 MIOCR II counties whose grant awards were reduced after the Legislature cut funding for the program?*

**Recommendation:** The ESC is recommending that priority consideration be a part of the merit review conducted by members, who would award from one to 15 “preference points” (up to five percent of the total points available in the proposal rating process) to eligible applicants based on their responses to the questions outlined below. Eligible applicants are the Sheriff’s Department or the Department of Correction(s), whichever agency manages the jail system, in the 15 MIOCR II counties. All 15 counties would receive a minimum of one “preference point” by raters in a seventh rating factor that would be used in evaluating only these proposals.

- What did the county’s MIOCR II demonstration project involve and was it successful in reducing recidivism among mentally ill offenders?
  - If successful, support the response with quantitative and/or qualitative data.
  - In unsuccessful, explain why.
- How did the county respond to the funding cut (one-third less money but for the same three-year grant period)?
  - Did the county leverage other funding streams to maintain all aspects of the project, reduce the scope of its project, or reduce the size of its target population?
- Did the county sustain all or parts of the project after the grant period ended?
  - If so, what components of the project continued, how much money was dedicated to the effort and what were the funding sources?
  - If not, explain why the project was discontinued.

*2. Should the CSA require applicants to base their proposed projects on strategies that have proved effective, through replicated research studies, with the target population?*

**Recommendation:** The ESC is recommending that the CSA require applicants to anchor their proposed projects on a treatment model or approach that has proved effective in reducing the involvement of the target population in the justice system. In addition to an evidence-based foundation, the proposed project could include strategies that have shown promising results with the target population (e.g., mental health courts).

*3. Should applicants be required to convene a multi-disciplinary Strategy Committee for the purpose of reviewing and/or approving the grant proposal submitted to the CSA?*

**Recommendation:** The ESC is recommending that applicants be required to undertake a coordinated planning process in developing the grant proposal. For all proposals, that process must include, at a minimum, the Sheriff, Chief Probation Officer, county Mental Health Director and a representative of local law enforcement. In addition, for proposals targeting juvenile offenders with mental illness, the coordinated planning process must include a representative from county education and child welfare agencies.

*4. Should the CSA define “mentally ill offender” for the purpose of the grant?*

**Recommendation:** Consistent with the board’s direction during the previous MIOCR program and accepted practice in the field, the ESC is recommending that applicants rely on Section 5600.3(a) of the Welfare and Institutions Code to define mental illness for juveniles and Section 5600.3(b) to define mental illness for adults. In brief, persons eligible to participate in funded programs would need to have a primary diagnosis of a mental disorder as identified in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Persons with co-occurring disorders would be eligible as long as the primary diagnosis was a mental illness.

*5. What other criteria, if any, should the CSA establish for offenders to be eligible to participate in funded projects?*

**Recommendation:** Consistent with the intent and purpose of the previous grant program, the ESC is recommending that eligible adults must be booked into jail. The booking could be for a new charge or a probation violation, and the offender could be incarcerated or released after the booking. The ESC is recommending that eligible juvenile offenders be detained or petitioned out of custody on a new charge or probation violation. In addition, the ESC is recommending that, regardless of age, all youth under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court be eligible to participate in a project targeting juvenile mentally ill offenders. For both the adult and juvenile target populations, the ESC is recommending that eligibility be based on the offenders’ status on July 1, 2006, which is consistent with the direction taken by the board for the previous MIOCR grant program.

*6. Should local match be required?*

**Recommendation:** The ESC is recommending that counties be required to provide a minimum local match of 25 percent of the grant funds requested. This obligation could be met through hard (cash) or soft (in-kind) matching funds. The local match may not include any state funds but could include federal dollars dedicated to the project. This recommendation mirrors the statutory requirement and board’s direction for the previous MIOCR grant program.

*7. What rating criteria should the members of the ESC use in evaluating the merit of proposals and developing funding recommendations for consideration by the CSA? How should the criteria be defined and what weight should be assigned to each rating factor?*

**Recommendation:** Based on its review and discussion of draft criteria developed by CSA staff, the ESC is recommending the use of the following six rating factors for all grant proposals: Statement of Need, Project Design, Interagency Collaboration, Probability of Success, Budget Appropriateness, and Overall Proposal Quality. The ESC requested that CSA staff modify the proposed definitions of some of these factors and include the revised rating criteria in the draft RFP the ESC will review before the CSA considers issuing the RFP. The ESC is recommending that all six rating factors be weighted equally (50 points each for a total of 300 points). There

would be a seventh rating factor for the “priority consideration” given to the MIOCR II counties (see Issue #1).

*8. Should the RFP include a funding cap on proposed projects? If so, what amount – and should it vary by county size?*

**Recommendation:** The ESC is recommending that the RFP include a funding cap (i.e., limit on the amount of funds that can be requested) and that this cap be based on county size – small, medium or large, as defined by population. The ESC requested that CSA staff develop options for appropriate cap amounts, particularly given the duration of the grant period. The ESC will review these options and include its recommendation in the RFP presented to the CSA board.

*9. Should the CSA set aside grant funds by region or county size?*

**Recommendation:** The ESC is not recommending that the CSA set aside grant funds by region or county size.

*10. Should the CSA award 18-month grants for the MIOCR funds appropriated in the 2006-07?*

**Recommendation:** The ESC is recommending that the CSA award 18-month grants that would begin on January 1, 2007 and expire on June 30, 2008.

*11. Should the CSA board award grants for less than the amount requested by an applicant if, as a result of the proposal evaluation and rating process, the ESC determines that a lesser amount is more appropriate for the proposed project?*

**Recommendation:** The ESC is recommending that this option be available to the board.

*12. Should the CSA authorize staff to contract with the “next willing taker” if the recommended ranking of proposals precludes full funding for a project or if an applicant is unwilling to take less than the amount requested?*

**Recommendation:** The ESC is recommending that the CSA board award all available funds by authorizing staff to offer a lesser amount to an applicant whose order in the ranking of proposals precludes full project funding and to work with the applicant in developing a reduction in the scope of the project commensurate with the reduction in funds. The ESC is also recommending that the list of ranked proposals be used in the event that an applicant’s recommended grant award is less than the amount requested and the applicant is not interested in the lesser amount.